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x539 pigeon and doves and partridge and quail, and from every direction hundreds of the most beautiful girls in the world were coming and sitting down to the meal and wine was brought for them by Negro slave girls.

Nasirulla and Salma sat down and ate of the feast until their stomachs were bursting, nor did anyone question who they were. And when all hands were withdrawn from eating, the Chief of the Eunuchs came round and he talked to some of the girls, and he came to Nasirulla and Salma and he said to them: Your faces are new. Were you part of the last present to our Lord? And Salma replied: Verily we are new here, and our desire is to be of service to our Lord and Master. But the eunuch sighed and he said: How can this be? It was different in the days when our master was a young man, though even then he rarely needed more than three hundred girls a year. But now he is old and his beard is white and his eyes are dim and even one girl would be too much for him. Yet we have three thousand in this place, and every month another hundred arrive as presents from the great rulers and governers, and these poor girls are condemned to live unloved and unseen in this vast harem, until they kiss and make love to each other from very sadness of heart.

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And Nasirulla was amazed at the words of the eunuch, and he thought: While I am here and until I find a way out of this closely guarded place I will at least comfort some of these poor girls.

On the next day and on the following days Nasirulla examined all the doors and windows of the harem, but they were all guarded by eunuchs armed with swords, nor could anyone pass in or out. And the days lengthened into months, but Nasirulla could find no place unguarded save one, and this was a window which was covered by